



MESSAGE FROM THE DEPUTY CHIEF

As you may know, the Diversity Commitment is now a part of the Office of Ethics and Integrity. The Diversity Commitment is dedicated to creating an environment where differences are valued and all City employees are a productive part of a high-performing team delivering services to the community. This edition of *Words and Deeds* contains helpful information for City staff about valuing diversity during the holiday season from the Diversity Commitment staff.

While most people in the U.S. celebrate Christmas, we believe that acknowledging the many holidays celebrated this season isn't the same as overlooking the significance of Christmas. The goal of diversity is respect for each individual. One way to show respect for coworkers is to include different faiths and faith traditions in your holiday celebrations. In a multicultural workplace, there is **more** to celebrate—not less.

Valuing Diversity doesn't mean we should "water down" our beliefs, our backgrounds, and our celebrations (it's a Christmas tree, not a Holiday tree!). The City's vision of a diverse work place is one in which each of us feels welcomed, included, and encouraged to share who we are as we work together to get the job done.

—Jo Anne SawyerKnoll, Deputy Chief Ethics and Integrity

Tips for employees, supervisors and managers

The holiday season is here... a time filled with decorations, gifts, parties and food. And with this country's ever-increasing diversity, many different holidays are being celebrated. So how do you celebrate the holidays that are important to you while being respectful of your co-workers, and make sure everyone feels included in the festivities?

The following are some suggestions for recognizing and including employees of all faiths in your celebrations this season.

- Remember that holidays mean different things to different people. For some people, holidays are important religious occasions. For others, holidays are times for family, food and festivities, with little or no religious connection.
- Include your employees in the planning of holiday events. Ask for everyone's input as to how to be inclusive in celebrating the many holidays this season. Encourage employees to bring in decorations and foods related to their important holidays.
- Make all holiday activities voluntary. Everyone experiences this time of year differently—some employees may not want to join in the group celebrations, and this should be okay.
- Be sensitive about foods being served. Provide vegetarian food in addition to foods that include meats.
- Discuss with your staff how they feel about gift-giving and make it voluntary.

For more information on holidays, check out these websites.










http://www.tanenbaum.org/newsroom/news_flash.aspx#DecDilemma
<http://www.religioustolerance.org/>

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Some of the October, November and December Celebrations in 2006

Oct. 23	Eid-ul-Fitr 	(Muslim) The month of Ramadan is the holiest period in the Islamic year. It is believed to be the month in which the first verses of the Qur'an were revealed to the Prophet Muhammad. Observing Muslims fast between the hours of sunrise and sundown, read the Qur'an, and worship in the mosque or at home. Ramadan and the fast end with a joyous celebration called Eid-ul-Fitr, which usually consists of two or three days of eating, celebrating, and exchanging presents.
Nov. 9	Diwali 	(Hindu) Diwali is a five day Hindu festival which occurs on the fifteenth day of Kartika. Diwali means "rows of lighted lamps" and the celebration is often referred to as the Festival of Lights. During this time, homes are thoroughly cleaned, windows are opened, and candles and lamps are lit to welcome Lakshmi. Gifts are exchanged and festive meals are also prepared.
Nov. 23	Thanksgiving Day 	(American) Almost 400 years ago, after surviving their first winter at Plymouth, the Pilgrims celebrated a harvest feast to give thanks. George Washington proclaimed the first National Day of Thanksgiving in 1789, and Abraham Lincoln revived the tradition during the Civil War. Since that time, Americans have paused to express thanks for the bounty of blessings we enjoy and to spend time with family and friends.
Dec. 8	Bodhi Day 	(Buddhist) Bodhi day celebrates the day of Siddhartha Gautama's realization and presentation to his fellow seekers of the Four Noble Truths. From that point forward, he was referred to as the Buddha, the Enlightened One.
Dec. 16	Hanukkah 	(Jewish) The story of Hanukkah is the struggle for religious freedom. Antiochus, the Greek King of Syria, outlawed Jewish rituals and ordered the Jews to worship Greek gods. After a long struggle, a small group of fighters were victorious over a much larger army. After the fighting ended, the Jews returned to rededicate the Temple in Jerusalem. They found only one day's supply of candle oil to light the menorah, but the lights miraculously burned for eight days.
Dec. 16	Posadas 	(Mexico-Christian) A nine-day tradition throughout Mexico. Processions of 'pilgrims' go door to door asking for 'posada' (shelter) commemorating the search by Mary and Joseph for shelter.
Dec. 21	Solstice 	Marks the beginning of Winter in the northern hemisphere; summer in the Southern Hemisphere.
Dec. 25	Christmas 	(Christian) The word Christmas comes from the words Cristes maesse, or "Christ's Mass." Christmas is the celebration of the birth of Jesus. Most historians believe Christmas was first celebrated in Rome in 336 A.D. Originally, the celebration of Christmas involved a simple mass, but over time Christmas has replaced a number of other holidays in many other countries, and some of their traditions (yule logs, Santa and his list) have been absorbed into the American celebration.
Dec. 26	Kwanzaa 	(African-American) Started in 1966 in California by a professor who wanted to encourage African-Americans to celebrate their heritage. Kwanzaa means 'first fruit' in Swahili, and is a harvest festival. Families exchange gifts, and have African-style feasts. Seven-pronged candleholders are lit on each consecutive night for the seven principles: unity, self-determination, working together, sharing, purpose, creativity, and faith.



About the Ethics Culture Survey

In September 2006, the Washington, D.C.-based Ethics Resource Center (ERC) administered the Ethics Culture Survey for the City of San Diego (CSD) and OEI. Thirty-one percent of City employees participated in the survey.

The Ethics Culture Survey was designed to help the OEI create initiatives to strengthen the City's ethical climate. Survey data will also be used as a baseline against which the City can gauge the effectiveness of its ethics and compliance initiatives as they are implemented.

City employees were surveyed to determine their perceptions about ethics and compliance issues in the City. Specifically, the survey measured:

- Expected outcomes of an effective ethics and compliance program, e.g., lower rates of observed misconduct;
- Awareness and usefulness of the City's ethics program;
- Exposure to situations that could lead to misconduct; and,
- Aspects of the organizational culture that relate to ethics and compliance.

For a copy of the full report, please visit OEI's website, www.sandiego.gov/oei, or call (619) 236-7182.

Key Findings from the Ethics Culture Survey

Highlights of the findings are discussed below. For relevance and context, some are compared to U.S. averages based on the ERC's *National Business Ethics Survey®* (NBES).

- ***There is a perception that employees are treated differently based on their level in the organization – the most senior employees are perceived to be less accountable than those who are not in management.*** Employees were asked if all levels of employees are held accountable if caught violating the City's ethical policies. Twenty-four percent agree or strongly agree that top management is held accountable, 30% believe middle management is held accountable, and 58% believe non-management employees are held accountable.
- ***Employees are more positive about the ethical behavior of their supervisors than "top management."*** For example, 66% percent believe supervisors "set a good example" of ethical behavior, compared to 34% believing that top management "sets a good example." Supervisors are the primary means for reporting misconduct and are a vital instrument in the ethical conduct of the organization.
- ***Employees are not well aware of City resources to help them make ethical decisions.*** Thirty-one percent said they had never or only rarely sought advice from the City's ethical policies and procedures or another City person or resource when facing an uncertain ethical situation. Forty-three percent said they had never referred to the ethical policies and procedures when deciding what to do about an incident of misconduct. Eighty-five percent never sought help from the Office of Ethics and Integrity.
- ***Misconduct is observed more than the U.S. average but reported at lower levels.*** Forty-one percent of City employees said they had observed misconduct within the last year compared to 28% nationally. Less than half of those employees who observed misconduct said they reported it. The primary reason for not reporting is the belief that no corrective action would be taken. Fear of retaliation was the secondary factor. These rationales are consistent with NBES findings.
- ***Abusive or intimidating behavior is the most frequently observed type of misconduct, significantly greater than the national average.*** Thirty-eight percent of employees reported seeing "abusive or intimidating behavior," compared to 23% nationally. Other types of misconduct that at least one in five employees observed were "lying to employees," "e-mail and internet abuse," "provision of goods or services that fail to meet standards," "misreporting of hours worked," "misuse of San Diego's services or property," "discrimination," and "a conflict of interest."
- ***About one-quarter of respondents felt pressure to compromise the City's ethical policies and procedures – almost double the U.S. average.*** Consistent with NBES findings, the most cited sources for pressure are top and middle management. However, City employees cite sources outside of the City as their main source of pressure at three times the rate of the U.S. average.
- ***Employees are generally confident that they can recognize ethical issues at work, but some feel unprepared to handle these issues.*** Eighty-eight percent agree or strongly agree that they are confident in their ability to recognize ethical issues that may affect their work; however, 40% say they are not fully prepared to address these issues. There is a potential for misconduct when employees may attempt to behave ethically without the necessary knowledge or skills to do so.

The Office of Ethics and Integrity's mission is to strengthen the City's Ethical Climate so that HONOR is cherished, personal integrity and ethical courage are the cultural norms and all employees are supported and encouraged to use their judgment and initiative in the conduct of ethical practices in the workplace.

Through these practices, our workplace will become more customer service oriented; our workforce motivated and satisfied; and public trust will be restored.